

# **FHIS/CENES TA Training Program**

## **Program Overview**

The FHIS TA Training and Mentorship program is a comprehensive program that incorporates essential aspects of the TA experience that focus on TA Training, Professional Development, and peer-evaluation of teaching and mentorship (returning TAs provide advice and feedback on incoming TAs' teaching and other aspects of TA training and language instruction).

### **TA Training**

TA training sessions and meetings with FHIS/CENES faculty and/or experienced TAs focus on skills necessary for competency development and success in the areas of language pedagogy and theory. TAs will complete a three-day Instructional Skills Workshop that will detail different areas of the teaching experience that may include lesson planning, peer observation practices (how to give and receive feedback on teaching experiences), additional language acquisition theories and practices, and additional areas of interest for language instructors. In addition to this, TAs will meet regularly with course coordinators to learn about guidelines regarding classroom practices, approaches to marking course assignments (compositions, exams, dictations), and they will have the opportunity to work closely with a peer-mentor, who is there to answer questions related to specific teaching experiences and scenarios and provide feedback on how to continue improving the teaching and learning experience at UBC and beyond.

### **Professional Development**

The professional development aspect of our program allows returning TAs the opportunity to fine tune and build upon teaching skills and practices gained during their first year experience by incorporating more advanced mentorship roles and new (and perhaps more individual-specific ways) of approaching teaching, assessment, and diversity in their classrooms as they prepare for their careers as university-level instructors. We offer a "Teaching with Apps" session that showcases several applications used by experienced language instructors and prompts participants to re-design an existing activity/assignment/lesson they have used in the past using any of the applications outlined in the session. We also offer returning TAs the opportunity to mentor new ones through the FHIS Mentorship Program. For this, experienced TAs use their prior involvement in our program to guide and facilitate new TAs' engagement with the teaching and learning process. Finally, both new and returning TAs may choose to hold their office hours in the FHIS Learning Centre as "tutors." This role gives them a global view of our programs and puts them in a position to work with students with varying needs, interests, and levels in a comfortable one-on-one setting.

### **Peer Evaluation of Teaching and Mentorship**

The FHIS Mentorship Program is led by 1-2 experienced TAs under the title "TA Coordinator". The primary role of the TA Coordinator is to manage a team of mentors (3-4 returning FHIS/CENES TAs) and to lead focused dialogues on "effective" classroom practices and guidelines that are inspired by inquiries that come directly from new TAs' experiences in or observations of teaching at FHIS. All mentors must attend this free CTLT workshop: <https://events.cltt.ubc.ca/events/developing-your-skills-as-a-peer-reviewer-of-teaching-introductory-workshop-6/> and Senior TA Coordinators must attend this one: <https://events.cltt.ubc.ca/events/mentoring-for-senior-tas-3/>

## **TA Training Workshop Schedule and Descriptions**

### **August**

#### **“General Orientation and Welcome to TA Training Program”**

(Friday, August 31 3:30-5:30, 799 Buchanan Tower (BuTo))

##### Brief description and goals of session:

TAs in the FHIS Department are responsible for teaching their own classes and communicating with their own students, all while following the parameters established by course coordinators and others in mentorship or leadership positions.

This session will outline the different goals of the FHIS TA Training Program and introduce them to key aspects of and resources available to them with regards to teaching independent language classes.

Topics to be covered:

- Outline of scheduled workshop with dates/locations
- TA duties and responsibilities
- Mentorship and Peer-review of teaching
- Resources

We will also have guest appearances from faculty members, former TAs, and Access and Diversity team members, who will share their experience.

### **September**

#### **“Preparing for the First Day”**

(Tuesday, September 4 10:30am-12:30pm, 898 BuTo)

##### Brief Description and goals of session:

Many new TAs hired to teach for the FHIS Department do not have prior teaching experience.

In this session, TAs will see at least two examples of how to introduce themselves to their students and how to start their first class, followed up by some tips for effective class management. Then, they will have the opportunity to design, execute, and receive constructive feedback on their approach to the first class from other TAs, TA coordinators, and faculty members.

Learning outcomes:

For this session, participants will...

- 1) Design and execute their first lesson plan, following examples outlined for them.
- 2) Provide constructive feedback for peers related to lesson plans created either prior to or during the session.
- 3) Take away new strategies from others on how to approach the first class (or future classes).

**Instructional Skills Workshop (ISW) (mandatory for all incoming TAs)**  
(September 22, 29, and 30 from 8:30am-5:30pm – location in IKBL – Room TBA)

***SIGN UP HERE NOW!*** [https://ubc.ca/qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_5dnq7alluhI7hPL](https://ubc.ca/qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5dnq7alluhI7hPL)

Brief description and goals of session:

The Instructional Skills Workshop is an intensive 3-day workshop geared towards honing in on skills needed specifically in a language teaching and learning context. During the workshop, TAs will work on lesson planning (design and execute 10-minute mini-lessons), peer-peer feedback, and focus on the relationship between theory and practice.

For general information on ISWs offered by CTLT, please go here: <http://ctl.t.ubc.ca/programs/all-our-programs/instructional-skills-workshops/>

## **October**

**“Giving Feedback” (Joint session with CTLT)**  
(Thursday, October 25 from 2:00-3:30, **799 Buchanan Tower?**)

Brief description and goals of session:

One of the most challenging aspects of teaching is offering students effective feedback that they can then put to use– both “on the spot” in classroom settings and more well thought-out feedback on formal assessments.

This workshop will provide some general parameters for giving feedback to students across the disciplines as well as offer some specific examples of and strategies for giving feedback in relation to specific skills and assessments in a language setting. TAs are encouraged to bring an example of “feedback” they have given either in class or in an assignment (excluding students’ names) for the hands-on portion of this workshop.

Learning Outcomes:

For this session, participants will:

- 1) collaboratively develop a working definition for “safe” and “effective” feedback in a general sense;
- 2) apply safe and effective feedback to a variety of sample situations and/or assessments and determine what types of feedback works (or not) in each case;
- 3) close the session with a brief reflection on what they will take away and put to direct and immediate use in their classrooms regarding “giving feedback.”

## January

### “Teaching with Apps”

(January 18 from 2:00-3:30pm – CENES Department – 997)

#### Brief description and goals of session:

Student engagement in the language classroom is enhanced through the use of technology, particularly educational apps.

In this interactive and hands-on workshop, workshop facilitators from three different language departments (CENES, FHIS, and Asian Studies) will showcase through description and workshop participation how they use apps in their own classrooms and encourage workshop participants to convert a “regular-old” activity into an app-enhanced one in the final 30 minutes of the session.

Special Instructions: Workshop participants will need to bring to the workshop an example of an activity that they would like to “technologically enhance” through app-use.

Learning Outcomes:

During this session, participants will:

- 1) Provide methodology for teaching with Apps (The Padagogy Wheel, [https://designingoutcomes.com/assets/PadWheelV4/PadWheel\\_Poster\\_V4.pdf](https://designingoutcomes.com/assets/PadWheelV4/PadWheel_Poster_V4.pdf))
- 2) Observe effective use of technology (apps) in a language context;
- 3) Participate in live demonstration of app-based activities;
- 4) Adapt an existing activity into a technologically-enhanced one through one of the three apps introduced in the demonstration;

## March

### “Celebrating TAships: ePortfolios”

(March 7, 12:00-3:30 pm, CTLT)

#### Brief description and goals of session:

The ePortfolio is a tool used to showcase specific aspects of one’s career progress, development, and approach to certain professional situations.

“Proud moments” introduces workshop participants to the concept of ePortfolios and gets them thinking about aspects of their teaching that have helped them to express why they teach, to define “who they are” as teachers, and how they interact with students – either on an interpersonal level or through actions like creating assessments, giving feedback, responding to blog posts and discussion forums, and writing syllabi and exams – using a blog-based ePortfolio platform.

Special Instructions: Prior to this session, students will need to set-up their ePortfolio page using UBC Blogs <http://blogs.ubc.ca/younglions/how-to/ubc-blogs-cheat-sheet/> .

Learning Outcomes:

In this session, participants will:

- 1) Identify the basic structure of an e(teaching)portfolio
- 2) List at least 3 points of the importance of having a teaching portfolio
- 3) Prepare a “proud moment” to showcase in ePortfolio and upload it via pages or posts

## **April**

### **TA Training and Mentoring Program in Review and year-end *Pizza Party!***

(Thursday, April 4, 2-3:30 in Buchanan Tower 826?)

A central aspect to improving any type of programming is participant feedback. In this session, we will combine the end-of-year “celebration” with a breakdown from TAs on what worked for them, what we could continue to improve upon, and what they would like to see in next year’s programming. The overarching goal is to collect face-to-face feedback to accompany pre-circulated surveys and to give TAs the power and opportunity to shape our training curriculum in years to come!

\*\* Throughout the year, TAs will work with Course Coordinators on different aspects of the TA Training Process. These meetings are set by the coordinator and are compulsory for all members of the teaching team (TAs, faculty).\*\*